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**GEOGRAPHIC
INTELLIGENCE
MEMORANDUM**

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***THE TRONDHEIM PROJECT
A SWEDISH OUTLET TO THE ATLANTIC***

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The "Trondheim Project" agreement, concluded by Norway and Sweden in March 1956 and revised in January 1957, is intended by October 1958 to provide Sweden with an outlet to the Atlantic Ocean in case its line of supply with the West is cut off by Soviet military action. Sweden's primary interest in the proposed railroad and road transit facilities is strategic, but the economic importance of the project has not been overlooked.

Although Sweden has attempted to maintain a strict policy of neutrality by avoiding any type of action that might be interpreted as having military implications, this emergency step has already led to Swedish Communist charges of military cooperation with NATO-Norway. Sweden, which for nearly 150 years has sought to detach itself from Baltic entanglements and Atlantic commitments, has not been able to ignore the postwar readjustment of Soviet boundaries in the Baltic, or the extension of Soviet territorial waters to 12 miles -- which eliminates old fishing grounds -- or attempts by the Soviet Union to create a neutral belt extending from the Baltic to the Adriatic Sea. The highly-publicized Soviet disarmament proposal of November 1956 suggesting the formation of a 500-mile-wide neutral zone of inspection in Central Europe, combined with the continuing Communist propaganda aimed at the creation of a Baltic "sea of peace," indicated increased Soviet attempts to extend the area of "neutral" states. These efforts culminated on 11 January 1958 in the Soviet suggestion for the establishment of an atom-free zone to include the Scandinavian countries of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, as well as Finland -- the ultimate goal being an alignment of neutral Nordic states that would weaken Western unity. Soviet policy has consistently been directed toward closing the Baltic Sea to the warships of non-Baltic powers, thus in effect guaranteeing Soviet domination of that body of water. The attempt by the USSR to turn the Baltic into a "Russian Lake," as well as the desired detachment of Denmark and Norway from NATO membership, has to date met with negative results. It must be noted, however, that the plan for an atom-free zone in Central Europe has received sympathetic attention in Scandinavia, particularly in Denmark.

Although the international policy of Sweden is dictated by its geographic position and traditional policy of neutrality, the need for economic self-sufficiency, especially in time of war, has led Sweden toward closer cooperation with its western neighbor, Norway. Since Sweden lacks both oil and coal, its basic interest in the Trondheim transit facilities is to gain access to the Atlantic for vital imports of fuels should the Skagerrak and Kattegat be closed.

In general, the Trondheim agreement provides for the (1) completion of a highway connection between the two countries, (2) promotion of railroad traffic on the existing Trondheim connection by making it attractive to shippers through the elimination of tariff inequities, (3) construction of additional petroleum port and storage facilities in the Trondheimsfjord, and (4) permission to construct an oil pipeline from the port to Sweden.

Trondheim (63°25'N-10°25'E), which is the chief port for northern and western Norway and the country's third largest city, is located approximately 50 miles west of the Swedish border. It has an excellent natural harbor that does not freeze over in winter and is usually ice-free. Norway has now replaced all the tonnage that was lost during World War II, and by 1953 the port traffic of Trondheim had reached more than 1,500,000 tons. The port has a total of about 19,000 feet of wharfage and an estimated military unloading capacity of 17,400 long tons of general cargo per day.

There are no direct highway connections between Trondheim and Sweden, only a narrow, winding, gravel road over the mountains, which is blocked by snow for 9 months of the year -- from October to July. The new highway, when completed, will parallel the existing railroad and is to be an all-season road.



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Roads, which now terminate at Turifoss on the Norwegian side and Enafors on the Swedish side, are to be connected by the new road, which will cross the border near Storlien (63°19'N-12°06'E). In addition, the stretch of road from Stjørdal to Turifoss is being rebuilt. Construction of the highway has been progressing at a rapid rate, with 1 October 1958 the target date for completion on both sides of the border. Actually, the work on the Norwegian side is now completed except for surfacing.

A single-track, standard-gauge (4'8-1/2"), steam-operated railroad line, extends from Hell (63°26'N-10°53'E) eastward about 40 miles to the frontier, thus connecting Trondheim with the Swedish network via Storlien. The proposal for double-tracking and electrifying the railway lacks Norwegian support since the present railroad, which is electrified on the Swedish side, currently uses only a fraction of its total capacity. In order to increase railroad traffic, rates for transit freight traffic are to be adjusted to eliminate tariff-computing inconveniences connected with border crossings. This step, in all probability, will have the effect of encouraging the use of the Trondheim connection by shippers in both northern and central Sweden.

Oil port and oil storage facilities, with subterranean storage tanks blasted out of solid rock, will be built at Muruvik and Langstein on the Trondheimsfjord. In event of a blockade, or with the special permission of Norwegian authorities, the storage facilities can also be used for other commodities. Under the revised agreement of January 1957, which extended the life of the accord from 25 to 50 years, Sweden agreed to accept leases for these sites in lieu of ownership. The facilities leased, however, will be operated by a state-owned Swedish company.

Article 4 of the agreement permits construction of an oil pipeline across Norwegian territory. Although a pipeline from the Trondheimsfjord to Sweden is considered technically feasible, no plans have as yet been made for its construction. Nevertheless, authorities believe that the pipeline will eventually be built.

The economic aspects of the Trondheim transit facilities, which are of considerable importance, have also posed certain thorny questions. Originally, the project was obstructed by Swedish commercial interests, who feared that the new facilities would prove more favorable to Norway. Delay of the project was, in effect, an attempt to prevent a shift of trade to Trondheim from Göteborg on the Swedish west coast, Sundsvall on the east coast, and other vital Swedish ports. According to Norway's initial point of view, which has since been altered, the oil port was regarded as a defense installation that should be operated on a "non-commercial" basis and was to be regarded primarily as a stand-by facility to be utilized fully only in the event of military emergency. The original plan to set up a Norwegian company to handle the transit of petroleum products from the Trondheimsfjord to the Swedish border has been abandoned in favor of a mutually agreeable plan allowing Sweden to negotiate with a Norwegian company of its own choice. Municipal authorities of Trondheim have looked with favor on the project since its realization would bring more business and employment to the city.

Although Swedish sympathies are definitely pro-Western, Sweden remains uncommitted and is not associated politically with either of the two major blocs. The completion of the Trondheim project is therefore regarded by Sweden as an important means of bolstering its military and economic position and of strengthening its policy of nonalignment. Significantly, it is also the belief of Swedish officials that, in the event of a nuclear or missile war between East and West, any motive for an attack against Sweden would be difficult to find. On the other hand, it is assumed that a war fought with conventional weapons over a long period would increase the risk of involvement for a neutral country.

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